

ANA presence boosts recruiting



Photo by Spc. Jim Wagner, 109th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment
An Afghan National Army soldier gives would-be recruits an eye examination. All soldiers must meet minimum physical fitness and health requirements before joining the ANA.

By Spc. Jim Wagner
 109th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

ORGUN-E, Afghanistan — When members of the 3rd Battalion, Afghanistan National Army, first got to town, they had a big impact on the tiny village located just miles from the Pakistan border, though not initially the way they expected.

Locals thought they were being invaded by a foreign country when the first ANA troops entered the village, one villager said. In the past, he said, soldiers would beat children who came too close to them or take food from villagers without paying. (The ANA) were polite, avoided making a scene and went about the job of enforcing local laws immediately, he added.

Today's ANA soldier is out to do more than take over border security operations; they are out to convince the people of Afghanistan that this is their army, one dedicated to protecting every Afghan citizen regardless of tribe or region.

And, so far, it's having a posi-

tive effect. Where at first people were nervous about Afghan's new army, they are now asking how to join.

While getting every Afghan to embrace their army may seem like a far-fetched goal (an army that so far numbers only several thousand or so), it's a goal one 3rd BANA commander says is inevitable.

"We are doing our job faithfully and these people respect that," said Col. Muhammad Akbar, 3rd BANA executive officer. "We can change their attitudes through our good character and our actions."

Akbar said his battalion's efforts in the community — which included removing an anti-personnel mine from a bridge in town and the capture of several al-Qaida and Taliban caches (which included weapons and communications gear) — have legitimized and given the townspeople faith in the ANA.

That faith, coupled with more successful recruiting drives in surrounding towns, will make Afghan

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NBC advice allows chemical survival

Maj William Mott
 11th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM, Afghanistan — "Whether or not gas will be used in future wars is a matter of conjecture but the effects are so deadly we cannot afford to neglect the question."

- Gen. John J. Pershing

Handling the deadly chemicals arsenic, anthrax, cyanide, and ricin and the dangerous chemical clean up, Operation Blue Dragon, are just some of the missions of the Nuclear Biological and Chemical Center

of Combined Joint Task Force-180.

These poisons have been identified as possible terrorist threats throughout the Combined Joint Operations Area, and suspected samples continually surface and are processed according to standard operating procedures. Operation Blue Dragon was the code name for the mission that retrieved radioactive materials from medical equipment in the Aliabad Hospital in Kabul.

NBC advice allows the commander and his staff to survive and win on a contaminated battlefield. With a command team of just five

personnel, Col. Jesse E. Daniels, director NBCC, manages the NBC aspects of management and safety of troops and civilians in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

"Unknown samples found in raids or caches, or substances reported by locals are taken for presumptive analysis and then possibly sent to the U.S. for confirmative analysis," said Capt. Lindsay "Riley" Carson, NBC operations officer. NBC reconnaissance and surveys are performed on questionable areas.

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World News (Compiled from CNN.com)



Searchers look for debris from space shuttle Columbia in Toledo Bend Reservoir Tuesday near Hemphill, Texas. All seven astronauts aboard Columbia died when the shuttle broke apart during re-entry over Texas Saturday.

Shuttle parts reported found in California, Arizona

HOUSTON — As President Bush tried to comfort families and colleagues of Columbia's seven fallen astronauts at a memorial Tuesday, NASA dispatched recovery teams to California and Arizona where pieces of the space shuttle were reported found.

The agency said the parts were possibly tiles or wing material.

"If it is wing material, obviously that would be very important to the investigation," said NASA associate administrator Michael Kostelnik. "Early material in the debris field is extremely important to the early events of the recovery that would shed important light on what the ultimate cause was."

A newly surfaced video shows the doomed shuttle over California, with what appear to be pieces falling off of it as it re-enters the atmosphere. This could indicate that Columbia was already in trouble well west of Dallas, Texas, where its final disintegration occurred.

He also said some large dense objects thought to be "one or more of the engines" have been discovered just over the Texas border in Louisiana. The pieces have been secured, he said, until they can be recovered.

CENTCOM chief investigated

WASHINGTON — The Pentagon has launched an investigation into allegations of possible misconduct by the man who would lead U.S. forces in the event of a military strike on Iraq, CNN has learned.

Gen. Tommy Franks, the head of U.S. Central Command, has been under investigation for weeks by the Pentagon inspection general's office. It is not clear how serious the allegations are or what direction the probe has taken.

"I am aware of the investigation and am cooperating with it," Franks said in a brief written statement. "It would not be appropriate to comment on the investigation until it is complete."

Sources said Franks faces several allegations — the most serious of which might be allowing his wife, Cathy, to be present during discussions of highly classified material. The sources also said questions have been raised about whether Franks properly repaid the government for his wife's travel on military aircraft.

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld — who would decide what, if any, disciplinary action Franks would face if any wrongdoing is found — took the unusual step of expressing support for the general before the investigation was completed.

"Tom Franks is doing a superb job for this country, and we are lucky to have him [in his command]," Rumsfeld told reporters Tuesday at the Pentagon. "He has my complete confidence and the complete confidence of the president of the United States."

Chirac sticks to his guns on Iraq

LE TOUQUET, France — UK Prime Minister Tony Blair appears to have failed

in his latest bid to persuade France to change its position on the use of force in Iraq.

Despite British lobbying French President Jacques Chirac said on Tuesday he remained steadfastly opposed to war before U.N. weapons inspectors have completed their work.

When asked how much time — weeks or months — inspectors should have, Chirac told a news conference: "I can't put a timeframe on it. It's up to them to decide."

"There is still much to be done in the way of disarmament by peaceful means," Chirac said.

Blair came to the Anglo-French summit at Le Touquet, in northern France, with the primary goal of persuading Chirac to back down from his anti-war stance and support a second U.N. Security Council resolution authorizing military force against Baghdad.

CNN's Robin Oakley said that British officials were not disappointed at the outcome but they would have liked a little more overt support from the French president.

Nevertheless the two leaders were determined to emphasise the positive and where they had agreed, Oakley said.

The French president said that France and Britain were "absolutely" at one that Iraq had to be disarmed, but that the right place to do this was through the U.N. Security Council.

Black History Month

February is Black History Month. In light of all the accomplishments made by African-Americans, every day this month the *Freedom Watch* will highlight an individual.

Benjamin Bradley, inventor

Born: 1830?

A slave, Bradley was employed at a printing office and later at the Annapolis Naval Academy, where he helped set up scientific experiments. In the 1840s he developed a steam engine for a war ship. Unable to patent his work, he sold it and with the proceeds purchased his freedom.

Died: ?



Photos by Spc. Jim Wagner, 109th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

An Afghan National Army soldier reads a list of requirements for enrollment in the army. When entering the ANA, soldiers are expected to respect members from other tribes and defend and protect all Afghan citizens.



Afghan males from the city of Orgun-E wait in line to join the Afghan National Army. By the end of the day, more than 130 men signed up to attend basic training in Kabul, which starts at the end of February.

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President Hamid Karzai's goal of 70,000 soldiers attainable.

Earlier this week, the city of Orgun-E hosted a Shura, or meeting of tribal elders, from the province of Paktika.

They came from throughout the province — and from places like Jalalabad and Kabul — to talk about the prospect of an army sponsored by the central government and having their young men join that army.

That day, approximately 130 Afghan men signed up to participate in the next basic training session at the Kabul Military Training Center, scheduled to begin in late February.

Almost universally, would-be recruits say they are joining to serve their nation.

"I would like to join (the ANA) because they are trying to bring peace and justice to this country," said Habib Ullah, a 21-year-old resident of Orgun-E.

"If the recruiting drives continue at this pace, we won't have to worry about 70,000

troops, we'll have 700,000 in a couple years," Akbar boasted.

There is some worry about the flood of recruits coming in and whether they are joining out of national pride, or whether there are less patriotic reasons. One international news reporter asked Akbar whether the new recruits were doing it more for a monthly paycheck or were spies from a regional commander or al-Qaida.

"No commander wants to lose men; if they join our army they are 'washing their hands' of that commander," Akbar said.

"The enemy is trying to get (into our army), but our security protects us from that, that is why we make sure every new recruit is vouched for by a village elder," he added.

The 3rd BANA has almost completed its tour of duty in the Orgun-E district.

This unit is the first ANA battalion in the field and has spent much of its time conducting platoon-level field training and patrol missions throughout the district. Next, they head back to Kabul and the KMTC to await further orders, while another battalion takes their place.

Soon, today's would-be recruits will be back in Orgun-E, this time as troops of the ANA and protecting the town they grew up in while conducting training missions on the ranges — to be replaced in turn by more and more troops as the ANA recruiting program takes off throughout the country.

As for the 3rd BANA, Akbar isn't sure where he's going, but said it doesn't matter.

"We will go back to Kabul and then we'll be ready to go wherever Afghanistan needs us," he said.

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If hazardous material is found, the area is cordoned off and tested. Tests conducted in the Bagram area have found anthrax in the soil and dust, and rumors have spread about its lethality.

"The natural levels of anthrax found in this region are not very hazardous to human health. It comes from years of locals grazing herds of animals in the valley," said Carson. It is not considered weapons-grade anthrax, she added.

A hoax used to terrorize villages, Red Mercury, is a home-made concoction in a sinister canister. It's sometimes presented to U.S. forces for sale as a hazardous material for quick profit.

"To thwart the Red Mercury hoax, we have published and distributed information throughout the CJOA showing what the canisters may look like, and to educate our soldiers for their protection," said Carson.

The NBCC is reviewing the component unit base defense plans and tailoring the NBC annex to cover the specific threat in this theater. The team works closely with all component units and continues to build their international rapport through active missions and planning with the International Security Assistance Forces' NBC personnel.

"We are always prepared to do our job, do it quickly and do it well, so that the effects on our mission accomplishment are mitigated, and soldiers' lives are spared," said Carson.



Courtesy Photo

An Italian soldier enters the fourth station of a Detailed Troop Decontamination operation at the International Security Assistance Force engineer compound in Kabul Thursday.

Bagram Air Base MWR presents

1530Z at the MWR building: "The Talented Mr. Ripley." Ripley is sent to Europe to retrieve a rich and spoiled millionaire playboy, but when the errand fails, Ripley kills the playboy and assumes his life.

Tomorrow's movie will be "Ace Ventura."



Local weather

TWO-DAY REGIONAL WEATHER REPORT:

	<i>Today</i>	<i>Thursday</i>
Bagram:	Scattered showers H: 52F L: 23F	Snow H: 43F L: 24F
Kandahar:	Scattered showers H: 64F L: 41F	Rain H: 55F L: 39F
Kabul:	Mostly cloudy H: 48F L: 28F	Rain H: 45F L: 21F
Uzbekistan:	Scattered showers H: 67F L: 44F	Rain H: 52F L: 39F

Weather forecast courtesy of the Bagram Combat Weather Team

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Coalition Sports Zone

(Compiled from *ESPN.com*)

Bryant helps Lakers hold off Pacers

INDIANAPOLIS — Kobe Bryant scored 35 points, Shaquille O'Neal fought off foul trouble for 19 points and 12 rebounds and Devean George hit a key 3-pointer as the Los Angeles Lakers beat the Indiana Pacers 97-94 Tuesday night.

It was the first game between the teams since Reggie Miller and Bryant fought after a Los Angeles win last March at the Staples Center. Bryant threw a punch at Miller and the two landed on the scorers' table near the Pacers' bench.

Shaquille O'Neal and Brad Miller were also involved in a fight last season when Miller was still with the Bulls. The two tapped fists before the game and there were no signs of bad blood between teams.

The Lakers led by nine with 2 minutes left before Indiana reeled off six straight points to trail 94-91 with under a minute left.

Then George — a 30 percent 3-point shooter — drilled one to make it 97-91.

It proved to be huge, as Brad Miller, Indiana's All-Star center, made a 3 from the top of the arc to make it 97-94 with 30 seconds left.

Bryant misfired on a jumper and Indiana's Al Harrington grabbed the rebound. He paused as if he were going to call a timeout, then passed to Reggie Miller who missed a 35-footer as time expired.



Kobe Bryant scored 35 points as the Lakers put down the Pacers 97-94.

The 6-foot-8 senior, expected to be the No. 1 pick in this year's NBA draft, did nothing wrong when he accepted two "throwback" sports jerseys, lawyer Fred Nance said in documents filed in Summit County Common Pleas Court.

"All LeBron did was receive a gift from a friend as congratulations for his academic achievements," Nance said. "Had LeBron wished to capitalize on his fame, the recompense could be in the millions of dollars."

Nance said James would not be attending the hearing.

Clair Muscaro, the Ohio High School Athletic Association commissioner, told ESPN.com that he and the association's legal counsel is due in the Summit County Common Pleas Court on Wednesday for a 9 a.m. ET hearing. Judge James Williams will preside.

James asks court to block ruling

CLEVELAND — LeBron James' attorney asked a court Tuesday to block a ruling that barred the high school basketball star from playing the rest of the season.



2002 NBA standings

Western Conference

Midwest

(1) Dallas	38-10
(4) San Antonio	31-16
(5) Minnesota	29-20
(6) Utah	28-20
(8) Houston	26-21

Pacific

(2) Sacramento	34-16
(3) Portland	31-16
(7) Phoenix	29-21
L.A. Lakers	23-23
Seattle	21-25

Eastern Conference

Atlantic

(2) New Jersey	33-15
(4) Boston	26-22
(5) Philadelphia	25-23
(8) Washington	24-25
Orlando	24-26

Central

(1) Indiana	34-15
(3) Detroit	31-15
(6) Milwaukee	24-23
(7) New Orleans	25-24
Atlanta	19-30



"Uh, sarge, I thought this was the light infantry?"



kevin_kilgore@hotmail.com

By Kevin Kilgore

Laugh Support

Tae kwon do: a shared tradition

Pfc. Debralee P. Crankshaw
11th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM, Afghanistan – Traditions are part of all cultures and sometimes countries share these traditions.

Tae kwon do, characterized by its fast, high and spinning kicks, is one of these traditions.

A tae kwon do class began 0130Z Tuesday at Dragon Palace. The class will be given Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays and instructed by Republic of Korea Sgt. Taehyi Kang.

All skill levels are welcome. Students will be tested every Saturday to advance to the next level.

“In tae kwon do, tae means foot, kwon means fist and do means the way of the mind. Tae kwon do is practicing your kick, practicing your punch and practicing discipline of your mind,” said Kang through an interpreter.

“The purpose of tae kwon do is not to kill each other. It’s not a sport. When you are in danger it is used to defend yourself and to save others in danger,” Kang added.

Tae kwon do may be self-defense training, but it is not considered risky.

“It is not dangerous; it is used to prevent dangerous situations,” said Kang.

According to Kang, the only injuries that may be caused are muscle injuries.

“Tae kwon do uses muscles rarely used in other activities, so it is common in the beginning to have muscle aches, but with practice, flexibility increases and eliminates these pains,” said Kang.

The class was organized for three reasons according to Kang.

“Tae kwon do is the traditional martial art of Korea and we wanted to inform U.S. and Coalition troops about it. We also wanted to improve the physical training of



Photos by Pfc. Debralee P. Crankshaw

One of the ability groups of the tae kwon do class held Tuesday, practices a basic punch.



Pfc. Christopher Paras, supply, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Combined Joint Task Force-180, practices a kick in his ability group.

the forces in Bagram and the teamwork of the countries,” said Kang.

According to Kang, tae kwon do is good for physical training in men and a good weight program for women.

“I do tae kwon do for the exercise and because I like the way it looks,” said Sgt. Yvonne Jarmoc, noncommissioned officer in charge, logistics, base operations.

Jarmoc has been training in tae kwon do for approximately two years. “With tae kwon do you can learn speed, flexibility and im-



Sgt. Yvonne Jarmoc, noncommissioned officer in charge, base operations logistics, performs a kick in her ability group. Jarmoc has studied tae kwon do for two years.

prove your reaction time. You can also learn how to control your mind,” said Kang.

Kang was satisfied with the first class. He is thankful there are people interested in tae kwon do.

“We are looking forward to many people coming to the class and practicing hard,” said Kang. “I will teach hard and try to make this a good class.”